

SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA WETLANDS RESTORATION PROGRAM DESIGN REVIEW GROUP

CONFLICT OF INTEREST STATEMENT – OCTOBER 2002

The San Francisco Bay Area Wetlands Restoration Program Design Review Group (the Group) attempts to have those reviewers who participate as members of the Group avoid any conflict of interest. Conflict of interest, as it relates to the Group, is distinguished into two categories: financial and personal/institutional. The two distinct types of conflict of interest warrant two distinct courses of action of the part of each Group member. All those members having a *financial* conflict of interest with a project will NOT be allowed to evaluate proposals for which they have a financial connection and/or provide guidance and comment on that project, without exception. However, those Group members having a *personal/institutional* conflict of interest are required only to disclose any relationship, yet are not disallowed from project review and comment.

Regardless of the type of conflict of interest, each Group member has the personal obligation to avoid a conflict as well as the personal obligation to disclose any such conflict, whether real or apparent, to the Group as a whole.

Financial Conflict of Interest. The Wetlands Restoration Program expects that Group members will not review proposals in whose development they have assisted or if they would receive a financial benefit from the funded project. A conflict of interest would be considered to exist whenever a member of the Group **or** a relative of a Group member (including, for instance, a spouse, sibling, parent or child) has a personal, material, or financial interest in a transaction or project under consideration by the Group.

Personal/Institutional Conflict of Interest. If a Group member has a personal or institutional connection with a project sponsor in any way, but there is no conflict of interest, the member will be allowed to participate in the project review provided that any connection is disclosed prior to project review. A personal connection with a project sponsor is considered worthy of disclosure if any of the following relationships were applicable during the **past four years**: collaboration on research, pilot, or implementation proposal or project; co-authorship; thesis or postdoctoral advisorship; and/or supervisor/employee relationship. An institutional connection – such as between employers and their employees – will be considered worthy of disclosure. For example, an employee of a state or federal agency is considered to have an institutional connection with a proposal submitted by that agency, even if the project sponsor is in a different division of the agency than the reviewing Group member. Similarly, a university faculty member is considered to have an institutional connection with a proposal submitted by that university, even if the applicant is in a different department of that university campus.

To avoid any problems with conflict of interest or appearance of bias, scientific and technical reviewers are expected to review proposals independently and without delegating the review task in whole or in part to any other person. Any efforts to delegate review will be considered a conflict of interest. If you are uncertain about a potential conflict of interest, please contact John Brosnan at (510) 622-5048.